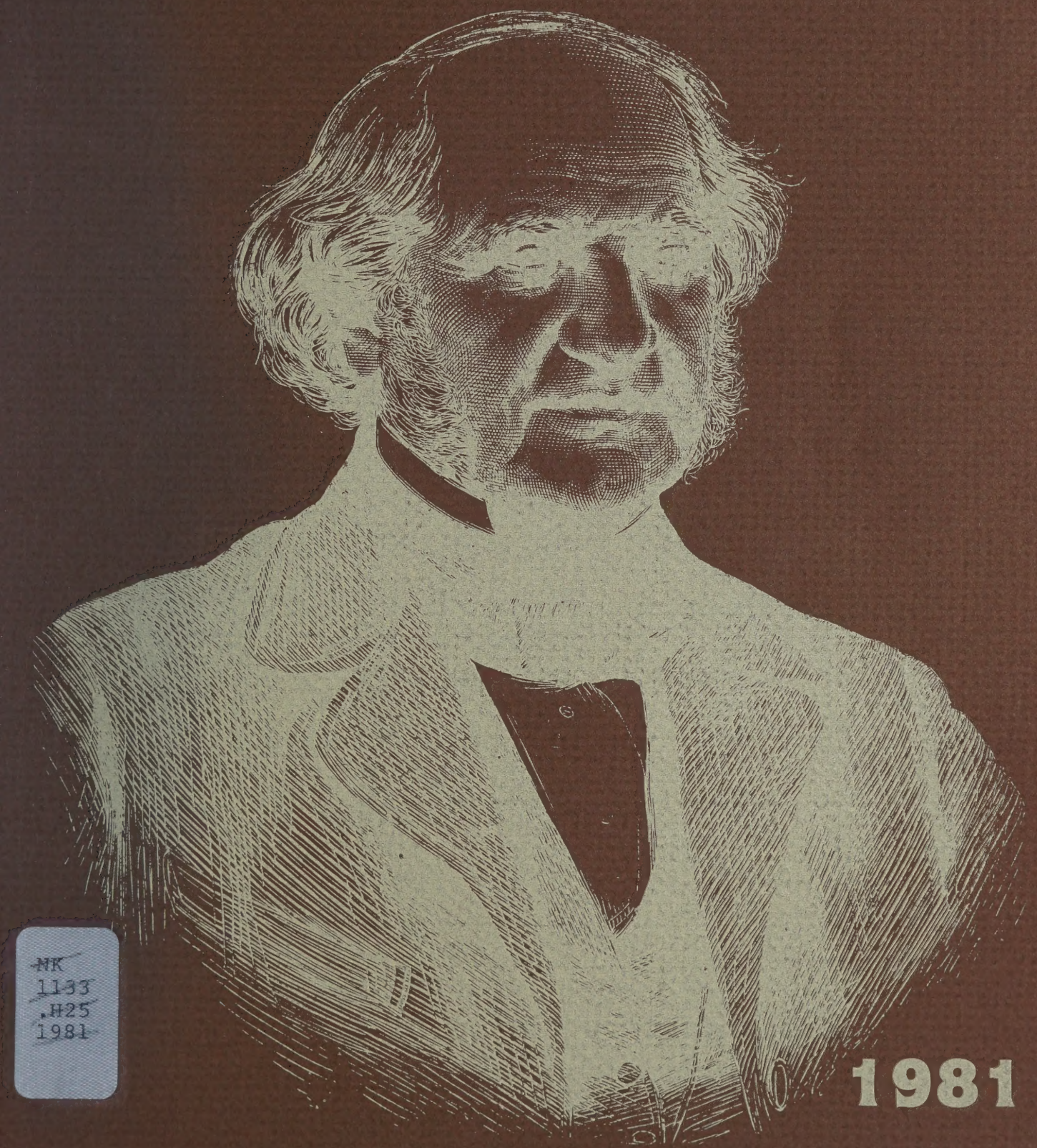
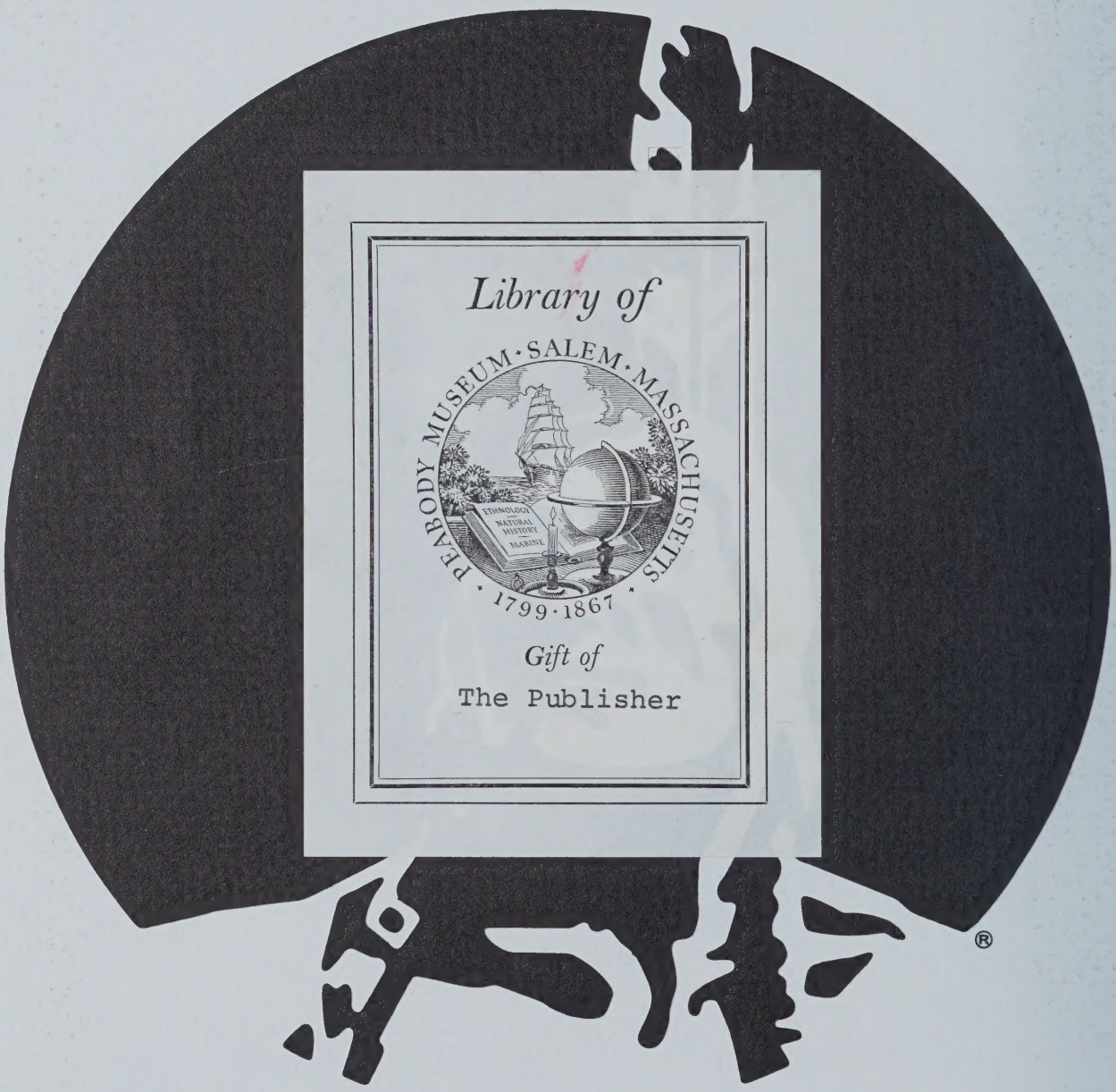
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Foreword

To our Chairpersons, Betsy Dodge Bundy, Pip Crockett and Arlene O'Shea, and to all of you who contribute to this year's Antiques Show, I send my congratulations and sincere thanks for a job well done. The results of your efforts are appreciated not only by me, but also by the entire Staff, Board of Trustees and Membership of the Museum.

The dedication and generosity shown by all of you who participate cannot help but insure the success of this annual fund raising event.

—Peter Fetchko

Acknowledgements

The Show Committee is grateful to . . . John Nove, Stuart Parnes and Robert Trent for the articles which appear in the catalogue and to Pequot Press for permission to include an excerpt from Morning Was Starlight by Ernest Dodge.

. . .our Business Sponsors: Century North Shore Bank and Trust Co., Deschamps Printing Co., Inc., Eastman Gelatine Corp., Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co. in Salem, Naumkeag Trust Co., Parker Brothers, and Salem Five Cents Savings Bank.
. . .our Benefactors, Sponsors and Patrons who have been so generous.
. . .Donald Costin for opening his home, "Greymoor" during show hours.
. . .Peter Fetchko, Director of the Museum, for his encouragement and support.
. . .The following for their contribution of Preview Party hors d'oeuvres and spirits: The Lyceum for quiche, the Hawthorne Hotel for Chef Barsanti's Signature Platter, Bistro Le Bistingo for wine, Romagnoli's Table for Venetian Pate, Cafe L'Espresso for cheese platters, As You Like It for tea sandwiches, Bruce Webster for cheese.
. . .Peter D. Barter, Beautiful Things and The Plant Branch for floral arrangements and decorations.

The Show Committee also wishes to thank:
. . .Rowand Fisheries Inc. for assistance in supplying shrimp.
. . .The Cheese Board of Marblehead for assistance in supplying cheese.
. . .The Salem Paper Co. for assistance in supplying paper products.
. . .Bruce Webster of the Great Boston Food and Beverage Corp. for his cooperation and help at Hamilton Hall.
. . .Balloons Over Boston for the bouquets of decorative balloons.
. . .The Advertisers who made this catalogue possible.
. . .Deschamps Printing Co., Inc. for printing the show catalogue.
. . .Caroline Standley, Director of Development, and Ellen Todd for their daily support.
. . .and to all of you who attend this show. Your continued support assures the success of this annual fund raising event.

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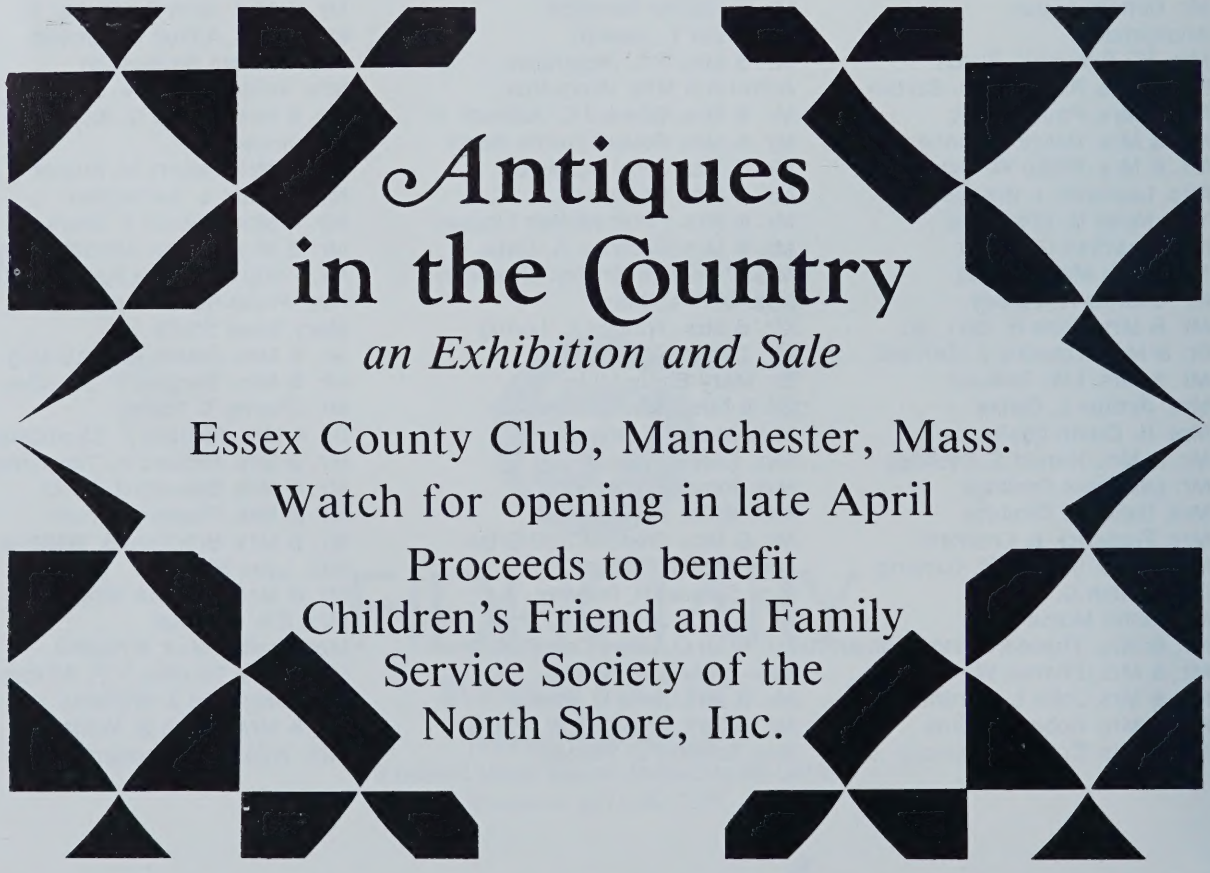
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The Flowering of the Peabody Academy of Science

By John Nove

A sketch of the Museum's middle years when, as the Peabody Academy of Science, it became a nationally recognized center for research and innovation in the natural sciences.

The 1860's were a time of change for Salem and two of its venerable institutions. For the town itself, its role as an important port had all but vanished. The mills, factories and tanneries that were being built would eventually become the basis for its new economy. At about the same time, two institutions on Essex Street were also feeling the effects of Salem's stagnant economy. East India Marine Hall, built in 1824 by the East India Marine Society primarily to house its library and collection of "natural and artificial curiosities", was kept open by the Society as a public museum. With most of its original members dead, and its future doubtful, some members had suggested selling the building and its contents as a solution to the Society's financial difficulties.

Across the street, the Essex Institute had problems as well. Formed in 1848 by the fusion of the Essex County Historical Society and the Essex County Natural History Society, the Institute was housed in Plummer Hall, a space rented from the Salem Athenaeum. Its collection of natural history specimens — many of which had been gathered in the County — was expanding, as were its public programs and research activities under the leadership of Dr. Henry Wheatland, the Institute's president, and Frederic Ward Putnam, a Salem-born naturalist, who was serving as its superintendent. Both Wheatland and Putnam recognized the Institutes need for more space and more money.

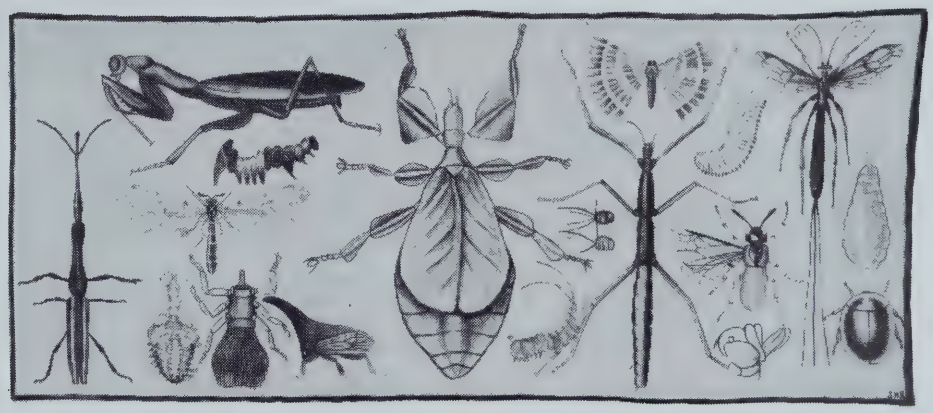


Fig. 1. A cloth teaching chart painted by James Emerton and used in his entomology classes at the Summer School. The chart measures approximately three by six feet.

Enter George Peabody

A plan to deal with the Institute's ailing finances was formulated by Wheatland and William Endicott. With Wheatland stepping down as president and Colonel Francis Peabody about to visit his brother, the Danvers-born philanthropist George Peabody, in England, Francis Peabody was offered the presidency of the Institute. He relunctantly accepted, spoke with his brother about the Institute's need for endowment, and returned with the promise that the situation would be investigated during Peabody's upcoming trip to America. It was during this period — 1865-1867 — that Peabody had already provided 1.5 million dollars to establish a system of public schools and teacher's colleges throughout the South, had given Yale $150,000 to erect and maintain a museum of natural history, and had presented Harvard with the same sum for a professorship and museum of American ethnology and anthropology. Peabody's nephew, the paleontologist O.C. March, a professor at Yale, no doubt influenced the gift to that institution. What remains unclear is the role of F.W. Putnam, also a nephew of Peabody's, in what was to take place in Salem.

George Peabody's plan, after talking with all the involved parties in Salem, came as a surprise to nearly everyone. Rather than directly offer assistance to the Essex Institute, Peabody proposed the creation of a new institution, the Peabody Academy of Science, which would be administered by a group of nine trustees. The Academy's purpose was to be "the promotion of science and the useful arts in the County of Essex". The trustees would have at their disposal $40,000 to purchase

East India Marine Hall, take on deposit the entire collection of the East India Marine Society along with the natural history and ethnology collections of the Essex Institute, hire a staff, and refit the interior of the hall to serve the needs of the Academy. An additional $100,000 was to be invested, its income used annually for the Academy's programs and maintenance. The Essex Institute would continue to exist without the natural history collection and with its focus primarily a historical one.

Negotiations between the involved parties began in 1867. Meanwhile, F.W. Putnam as superintendent of the Essex Institute's museum, had begun to assemble a group of able young naturalists at the Institute, classmates of his from the laboratory of Louis Agassiz at Harvard. Late in 1867 Putnam and his three friends, Edward Sylvester Morse, Alpheus Hyatt, Jr., Alpheus Spring Packard, Jr., moved across the street as the curatorial staff of the new Peabody Academy of Science. Putnam was designated to serve as the Academy's first director.

The Reconstruction of East India Marine Hall

Using a design created by E.S. Morse, a mezzanine was created along three walls of the Hall. In addition, a balconied superstructure with a tunnel running through its middle was constructed down the center of the Hall. Every available foot of space was taken up with newly constructed cases equipped with a shelf bracket system invented and later patented by Morse. The Hall of the East India Marine Society, called "perhaps the most stately single room in all of New England" by historian Walter Muir Whitehill, was drastically changed to meet the needs of the new Academy. The curators, with the assistance of Caleb Cooke, installed both ethnology and natural history exhibits in the new hall. Zoological material predominated, with most botanical material relegated to a storage area in the basement where it could be examined by appointment only. During the 1869 annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, held that year in Salem, the Academy was formally dedicated. The Reverend James Very of Salem, never at a loss for composing poems or hymns for special occasions, appropriately commemorated the event:

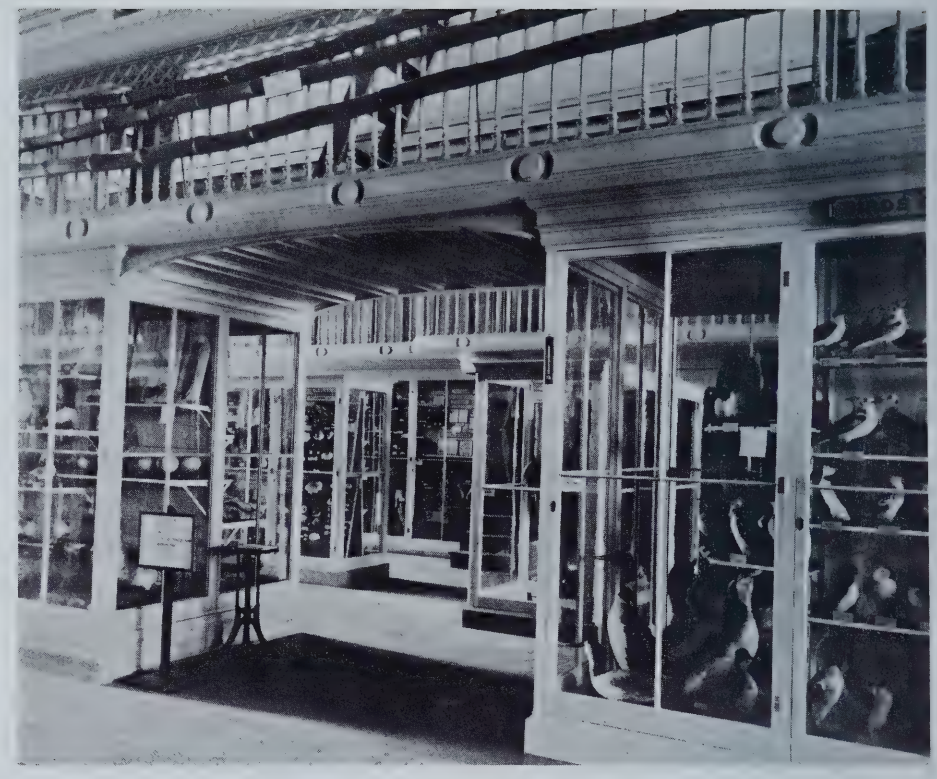


Fig. 2. East India Marine Hall in 1890.

The noble hall our fathers planned,
  Where gathered were the rich and rare
From every clime and every land,
  And long preserved with faithful care;

To Science now we dedicate,
  That doth all Nature's realms explore;
New ways through continents create,
  And cables stretch from shore to shore.

And Higher still, on soaring wing,
  The great Creative Thought would find;
And study, in each living thing,
  The end for which it was designed.

That it may serve that lot of man,
  And to the race a blessing prove;
Unfold the universal plan
  Of God's beneficence and love.

Honor to him, who, far and wide,
  For these high ends his wealth bestows;
Which, like some mighty river's tide,
  Through all our land exhaustless flows.

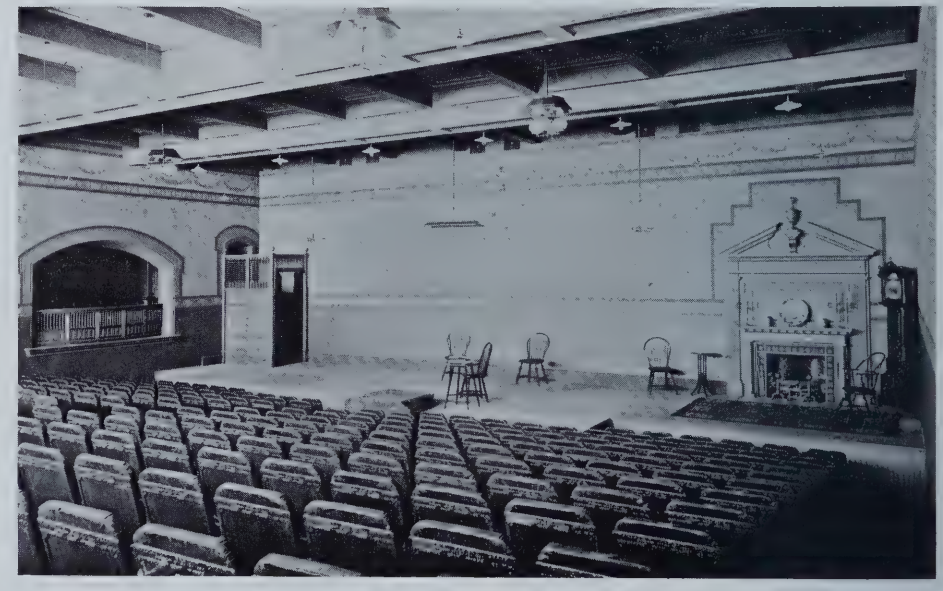


Fig. 3. Academy Hall, showing its stage and "opera type" seats. The lighting appears to be a combination of both gas and electric fixtures.

Innovations in Scientific Communication

Communication between scientists, always an important factor in the development and critical examination of new ideas and theories, was for the most part limited to the mails. As early as 1866 F.W. Putnam conceived of a publication listing naturalists from around the world by name, complete address and area(s) of specialization. He solicited such information and published his first version of the Naturalists' Directory in two installments in the **Proceedings of the Essex Institute.** After moving to the Academy and establishing his own printing enterprise, the Salem Press, at the corner of Derby and Liberty Street, Putnam continued to develop the Directory. It became a yearly labor of love and by the mid-1870's included nearly 2500 naturalists from more than 125 countries.

A related project begun by Packard, Putnam, Hyatt and Morse was the creation of **The American Naturalist**, the first American popular magazine of natural history. It featured illustrations with most of the articles and had as its purpose:

> to be a scientific monthly addressed to all lovers of nature; it is hoped that it will be equally welcome to farmers, gardeners and artisans. Its aim is practical and economic as well as theoretical.

It met with great critical acclaim, but because of its somewhat limited circulation it was characterized by one reviewer as:

> A rose born to blush unseen
> And waste its sweetness on the Salem air.

The Naturalists' Agency, which grew out of **The American Naturalist**, was yet another one of Putnam's ventures. Located below East India Marine Hall in one of the building's original retail spaces, the Agency provided naturalists with books, pamphlets, equipment and supplies for the pursuit of their research interests. In addition to carrying material printed by Putnam's Salem Press, the Agency became the authorized agent for the publications of the Smithsonian Institution, as well as the California, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston Academies of Science. Both the Naturalists' Agency and Naturalists' Directory were sold in the late 1870's to S.E. Cassino, a local publisher of natural history material.

The Summer School of Science

In 1876, a 20 x 30 foot building was built on the Academy's grounds to house the Summer School of Science. Originally organized by Alpheus Packard, the school was a place where teachers could learn about the natural sciences through the hands-on approach that had been popularized by Louis Agassiz. The Summer School, along with Agassiz' school on Penikese Island in Buzzards Bay, the Teachers' School of Science operated by the Boston Society of Natural History and its offshoot, the Seaside Laboratory in Annisqum were directly responsible for the introduction and expansion of science in the curriculum of public school systems throughout New England. Subjects taught at the Summer School included entomology, marine biology, microscopy, vertebrate and invertebrate zoology, arachnology, and botany. During the second and subsequent years, morning lectures were open to the general public four days a week. Registered students took part in afternoon laboratory sessions, and on Wednesdays participated in dredging expeditions. After six seasons of operation, the Summer School closed due to lack of sufficient enrollment.



Fig. 4. Students at work in the Summer School of Science, circa 1880.

Academy Hall

Prior to 1877, lectures conducted by members of the Academy staff were held in schools and meeting halls throughout the County. A small lecture area was finally added between the cases in East India Marine Hall, but it was not until 1886 that a "proper hall" was constructed for lectures, concerts and the assorted entertainments. Academy Hall, attached to the southeast corner of the original building (and now occupied by natural history exhibit rooms), boasted 350 "opera type" seats positioned on an incline, as well as incandescent lighting. Scrapbooks from the era describe evenings featuring classical music, music by banjo, mandolin and glee clubs, minstrel shows, bird imitators, hypnotists and lantern-slide travelogues, as well as scientific lectures oriented to a general audience.

The End of An Era

As early as 1881, E.S. Morse suggested that the Academy concentrate on its strengths, rather than try to compete with the collections of the Museum of Comparative Zoology and the Boston Society of Natural History. During that era, alcoholic specimens were discarded as were some mounts of exotic animals; the emphasis began to turn toward local natural history, and ethnology. In 1889, John Robinson, an accomplished botanist and acting director at the time, started work on East Hall, the unfinished space above Academy Hall. He isolated the ethnology collections and material relating to Salem's past and an important center of commerce. East India Marine Hall continued to house the natural history collections. With Robinson and Morse in command, the Academy moved into the twentieth century. The Marine Room, located under part of East India Marine Hall was Robinson's next project, followed by Weld Hall, which was built to house Morse's Japanese collection on its second floor and Academy offices on the first.

Both the concept and focus of the Academy had changed and expanded to embrace both maritime history and ethnology. Finally in 1915, with no dissenting votes, the Academy's name was changed to its present one: the Peabody Museum of Salem.

The first officers of the Peabody Academy of Science



ALPHEUS SPRING PACKARD, JR.



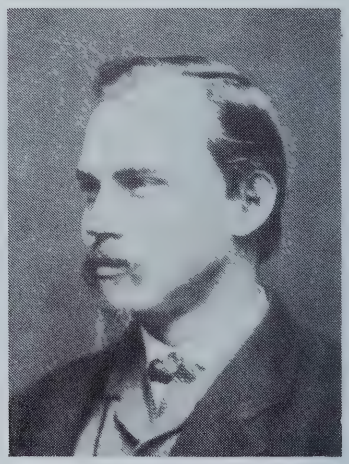
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Author's Note:

Much of the information in this article is based on historical research carried out over the past quarter-century by Dr. Ralph Dexter of Kent State University in Ohio. Dr. Dexter spends his summers in Gloucester and visits the Museum twice a week to continue his work. During these visits he graciously shared his knowledge of and enthusiasm for this frequently neglected period of this institution's history.

John Nove has been Curator of Natural History for two years. "Natural History in Victorian Salem", an exhibit that recently opened at the Museum, and upon which this article is based, came about as a result of his interest in both the Victorian Era and local 19th century naturalists.



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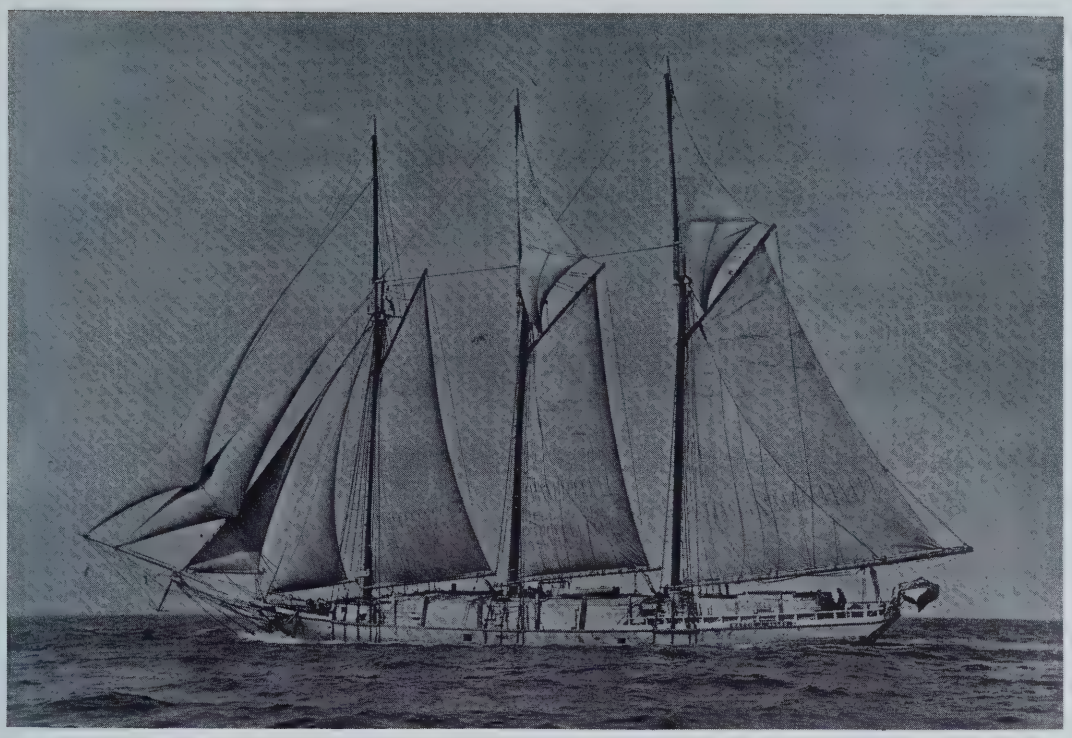
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MATTIE J. ALLES, 3-M Schooner Built 1883, Yarmouth, ME
Photo by W.B. Jackson of Marblehead

An Excerpt from:

Morning Was Starlight

My Maine Boyhood

by Ernest Dodge

THE COASTING TRADE

From the first settlement of New England down to World War I, most bulk cargoes moved up and down the Atlantic seaboard in vessels called coasters. The coasting trade reached its height in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These vessels performed the same services as freight cars or trucks would do today, but bulk cargoes were cheaper to ship by water even after rails and roads were developed. In the year 1876, for example, the lighthouse keeper at Owl's Head, Maine, counted over 16,000 passing schooners, not including other rigs and steamers. Most of the coasters were schooners but occasionally, especially in the early days, small brigs and brigantines were used and there were specialized types of sloops, sailing scows, and the well known Johnny Wood Boat.

Most cargoes were carried in two and three-masted schooners but, for the coast trade especially, schooners increased to enormous sizes as four, five, and six-masters (and one seven-master) were built.

The greatest single trade was in lumber products from Maine and the Maritime Provinces being shipped south. There were, however, many other trades involving coasting schooners.

Dried salt fish was taken to various markets, including the West Indies. Small ancient schooners called kiln-wooders carried kiln wood to voracious lime kilns of Rockland and Rockport — an industry that began in Thomaston, Maine, in 1733 and continued into the mid nineteen-twenties. Any kind of soft, dead scrapwood, often the lumber debris from the mills picked up along the shore, was used for this purpose. In contrast, the finished casks of lime were highly flammable and dangerous if the cargo got wet. Because of this danger, new tight vessels were used to carry the lime to Atlantic seaboard markets.

Big two-masters and large stone sloops loaded granite at the dozens of quarries along the New England coast and took it to the seaboard cities for building construction and paving blocks. The schooners used for this trade often had their masts set unusually far apart to give room for the derrick to swing in loading granite blocks. Round, water-worn stones were also picked up off the sea beaches and sold for cobblestones.

The ice trade in Maine began in 1820 as schooners carried it from Maine ports to Boston for the international ice trade (which began in 1806), and farther south for mint juleps.

Bay coasting, employing small two-masted schooners, was a specialized business. The vessels, usually owned by one skipper, kept all the stores along the coast supplied with flour, sugar, molasses, groceries of all kinds, salt, grain, cement, farm equipment and other hardware.

Large cargoes of baled hay were moved up and down the Penobscot and other large rivers by schooners. Specialized craft called gundalows were used in Great Bay, Portsmouth, and along the Merrimack River for hauling lumber, salt hay, mud, manure, sand, or gravel.

Thousands of men were employed in the variety of industries, depending on the coastal trade. After World War I all-weather roads were built and trucks replaced the old schooners still operating. A few, with some new replicas, are operating as tourist boats along the coast today from Maine to Florida, sometimes migrating with the seasons.

THE LUMBER TRADE

Lumber was king in the nineteenth century and the majority of coasting schooners were engaged in some aspect of it. Bangor, Maine, for example, was the leading lumber port in the world, shipping over 8,700,000,000 feet beween 1832 and 1888. Boards, timbers, and other long lumber were paramount cargoes; staves, barrelheads, box shooks, clapboards and shingles were also exported in enormous quantities.

There were specialized trades in cordwood and later in pulpwood. This was all four-foot wood for fuel or, in the case of pulpwood, to be taken for pulp to the paper mills. Specialized industries required specialized tools. At the top of the photograph is a sketch showing two schooners being loaded with cordwood which had been hauled from the woods to the shore in winter. The cordwood is being loaded with wheelbarrows built especially for that purpose.

After the hold was filled, a substantial deckload was taken on and the vessel sailed to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, or elsewhere returning with coal from Baltimore or some other port.

The wheelbarrow on exhibition in the photograph is one of those built by, and given in memory of, George Flint Dodge, who used it at his wharf on Union River Bay, Maine.

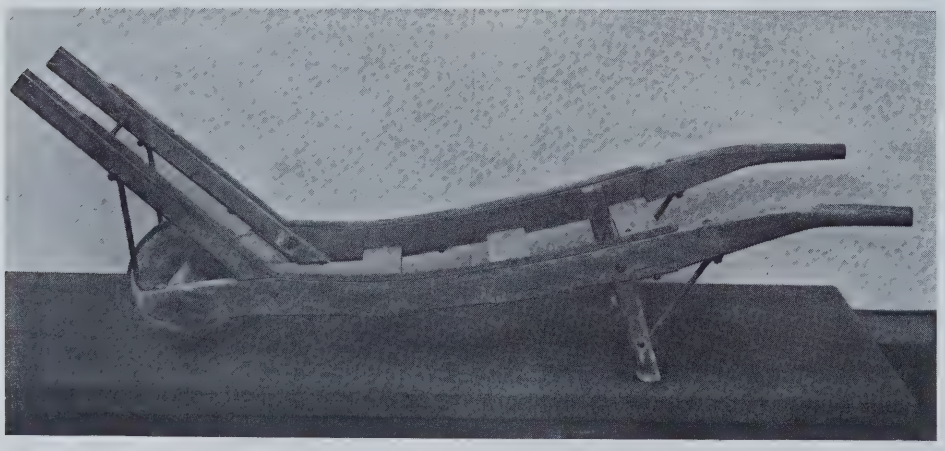
Carrying lumber was the biggest business in the Bay but my most intimate contacts were with another sort of trade. On our own side of the cove the old wharf, owned and used by several generations of the Whitmore family, was kept in repair by my father for shipping his cord wood. Nearly every winter, throughout most of the twenties, he hauled cord wood from the woods and piled it in the old brick yard near the wharf. When good weather came, my father built a smooth runway of planks from the wood piles to the wharf's end. He usually sold the wood to the Clark Coal Company of Bar Harbor and sometime during the summer Captain Ralph Leland arrived with their little schooner **Mildred May**. She was a graceful vessel, painted grey with a white boot top, rails and house. Narrow for a coaster, she was a good sailer. I always watched for her arrival with anticipation and I can see her now, rounding the buoy at high tide. The sails dropped and Captain Leland pushed in to the wharf with his yawl boat, that all-purpose little power boat that hung from the stern davits of every coaster. Captain Leland sailed the **Mildred May** with one other man as crew. The lack of man power was compensated by the donkey engine up forward which did all the heavy hauling and hoisting. Two experienced men with a schooner, a yawl boat, and a donkey engine worked wonders.

I always delighted in watching my father and his crew load the vessel. It was hard work. In the cordwood trade a schooner carried several wheelbarrows of a special type unknown for any other purpose. They were large, wide built with an open frame and a small wheel, about a foot in diameter. The barrow was especially adapted for wheeling on a plank runway. At the front, two posts solidly bolted to the frame projected out over the wheel at an angle of about 30° like a pair of enormous horns. A maximum load of wood could be piled on one of these wheelbarrows as half of the load was over the wheel and beyond.

With loaded barrow the wheeler took off down the slightly sloped runway, holding on and keeping the barrow on the track. As he reached the schooner's rail he shouted, "In the hold," as a warning to the men below. At the hatch combing the wheel hit a block, the wheeler gave a mighty heave, and the wood went thundering into the hold. After every chink below decks was full, the deck load was piled high until there was not a cranny for another stick of wood and still leave room to work the ship. The captain and his crew stowed the wood while my father with three hired hands did the wheeling.

The few days it took to load the schooner was a time of good humor. Impromptu tests of strength to see who could wheel the biggest load livened the day. I remember one big man of tremendous physical strength, stone deaf and none to bright. One wheeler would quietly put on a little extra-sized load. The big fellow would watch this and then rumble, "Showing off." Piling on an enormous load, so heavy that he could hardly hold it back, he would trot down the plank track, dump it, and laugh uproariously at his own strength. I played around the vessel's deck, exploring her from end to end, and soaked up the jokes and good natured banter while waiting for the inevitable recall whenever I ventured into the rigging.

Not the least ingredient of this well remembered atmosphere were the smells. Here the smell of the good clean wood, the rock weed, the clam flats, rigging, tar, and all those peculiar odors rising from the vessel's interior blended into one exquisite whole. It was great stuff — I can still hear those shouts of "In the hold!" and the cord wood thundering down.



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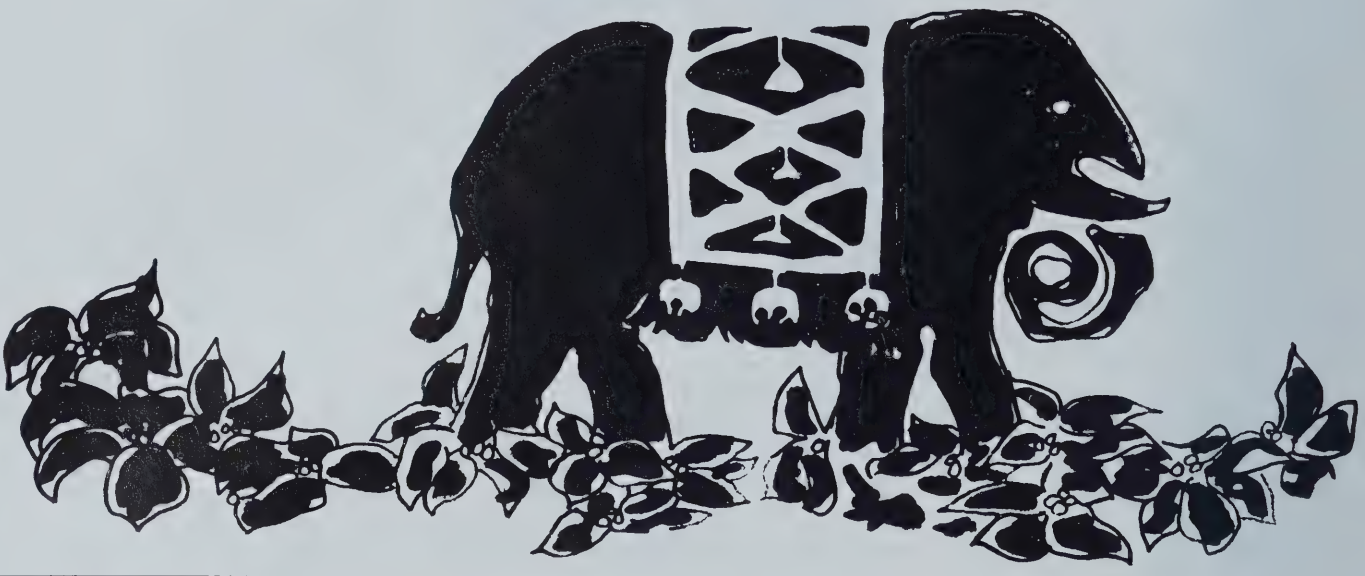
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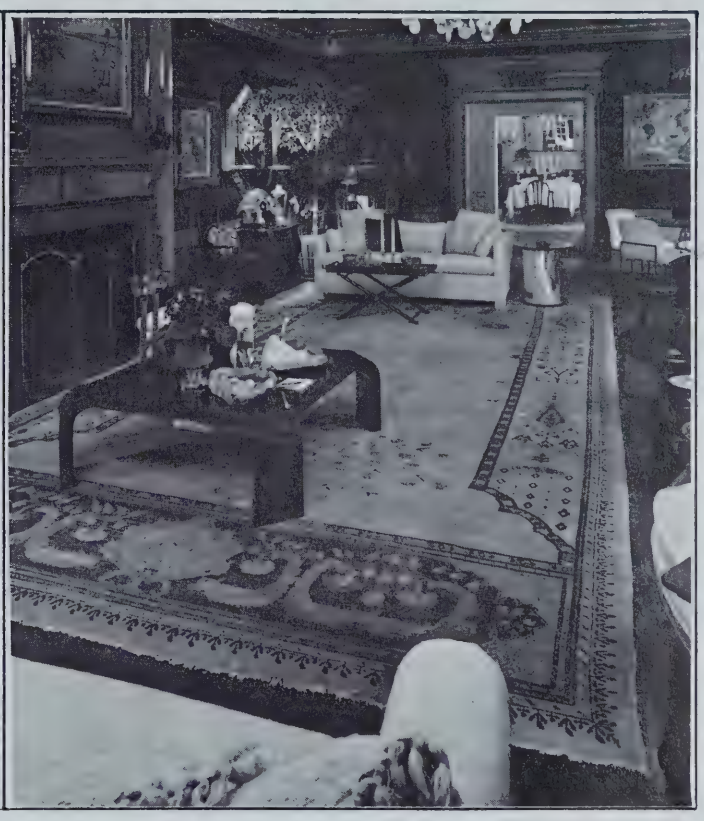
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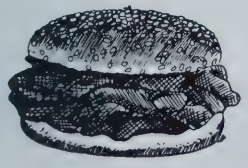




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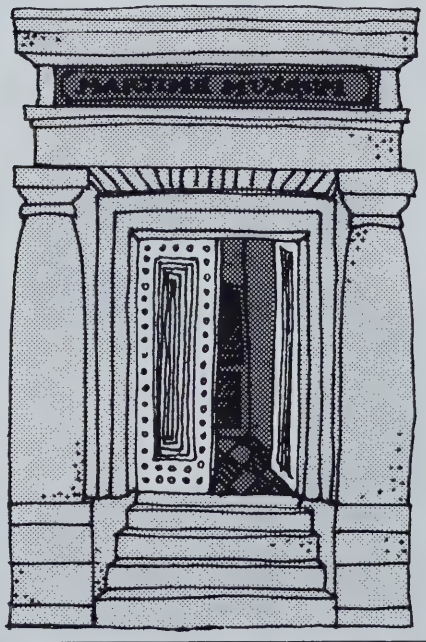
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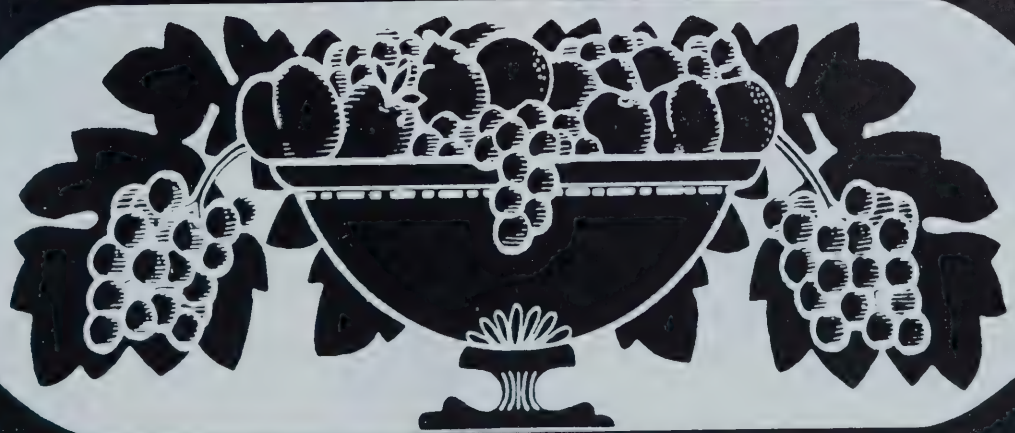
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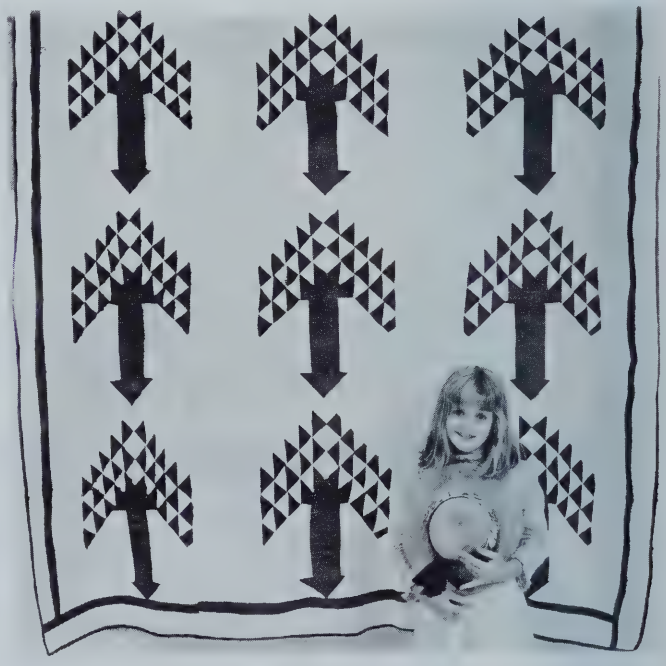
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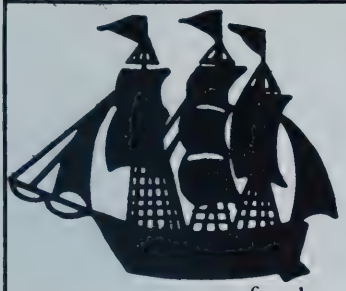
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The Symonds Joinery Shops of Salem and Their Works

By Robert F. Trent

For the past fifteen years, a group of scholars headed by Benno M. Forman of the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum has been investigating the joiners, turners, and other furniture-making craftsmen of seventeenth-century New England. They have forged a whole new range of research tools, including close documentary investigation and comparison of structure, form, and decoration, which have given furniture history a new respectability among historians and completely caught English furniture historians off-guard. In fact, by linking New England regional joinery styles to the hands of individual craftsmen and by tracing these craftsmen to their homes in England, American scholars have identified more English regional furniture styles than had all previous English scholarship in the past.

One of the first New England regional styles identified by Benno M. Forman in 1968 is the Symonds school of joinery based in Salem.[1] Among the most accomplished and prolific joinery traditions of the early period, the Symonds joinery school was founded in Salem by John Symonds (born before 1595 — died 1671), who came to Salem before 1636 from Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, a market town near the great East Anglian port of Norwich.[2] Norwich supported a large population of Netherlandish refugees, who had fled to Protestant England after the commencement of the war against Lowlands Protestant revolutionaries by Philip II of Spain in 1567. Many came from Antwerp, an artistic and crafts center, and the skilled joiners among them brought to Norwich an avant-garde strain of Mannerist carved and applied ornament. An excellent example of this style is a wall of joined interior paneling formerly in the Star Hotel in Great Yarmouth, dated 1595 to 1600 (fig. 1), about the time when

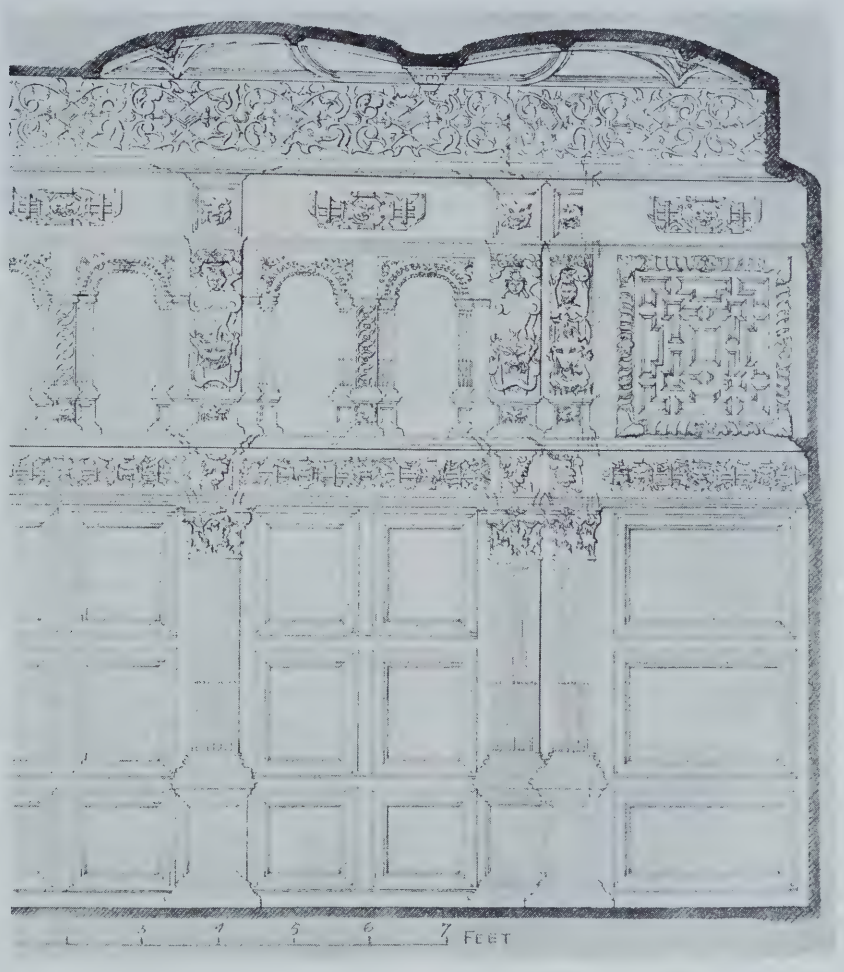


Fig. 1. Detail of a room formerly in the Star Hotel, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, 1595-1600. Reproduced from Margaret Jourdain, English Decoration And Furniture of the Early Renaissance (1500-1650) (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1924), p. 52, fig. 58.

John Symonds began serving his apprenticeship there. In this heavy, lush decoration may be seen all the antecedents for the joined case pieces Symonds and his apprentices executed in Essex County, particularly the carved S-scrolls of the upper frieze, the strapwork of the lower frieze, and the tight mitered moldings of the panel on the center right.

The probate inventory of John Symonds, taken in September, 1671, contains some all-important references to tools which augment our knowledge about him:

Joyners Tools Benches and lare, 5 li. 5s. 6d.
2 Bedsteds almost finished, 3 li.
3 stools and one halfe of a Box, 125.6d.
1-2 Grindstone & windlass & a small grindstone, 5s.
Timber, planke 8 board, 5 li. 12s.
an apprentice of 17 years old hath 3 year and 9 moneths and 2 weekes to serve[3]

Symonds' tools included a "lare," or lathe, demonstrating that he produced the turned ornament on his case pieces. Many joiners did not possess turning skills, and the fact that Symonds did is of great interest because of a development of the turned ornament seen on Symonds case pieces later in the seventeenth

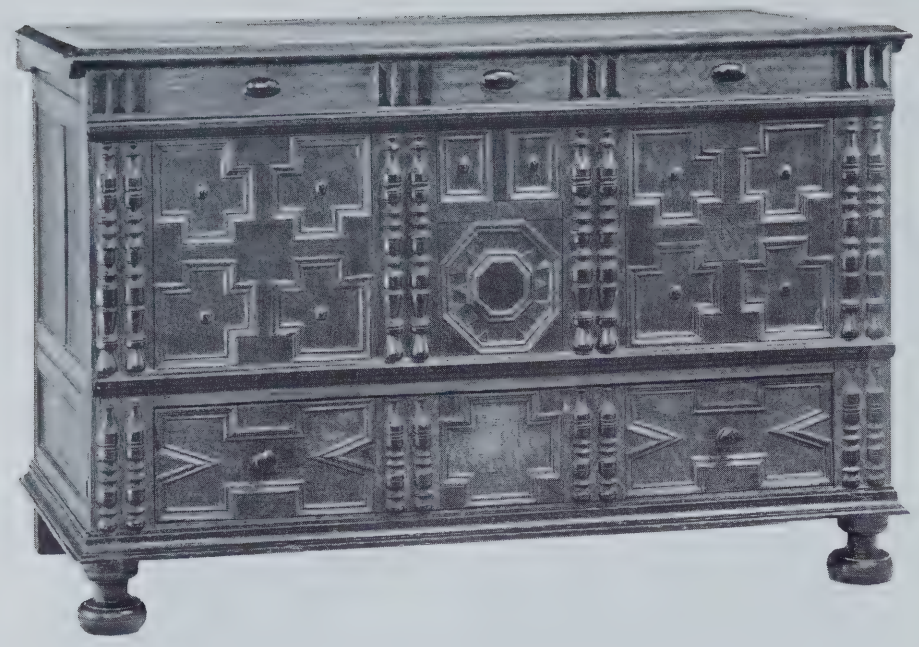


Fig. 2. Chest with one drawer, attributed to the Symonds shops, 1660-1700. H: 28 7/8" W: 46" D: 20 ¾". All dimensions without restored lid. Private Collection, on loan to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (246.1980).

century. Two different forms of applied spindles or columns are found on Symonds case pieces, a first composed of multiple urn and reel forms, and a second composed of a Tuscan Doric column embellished with sharp-edged reels above and below. The first form is undoubtedly the type brought from Great Yarmouth by John Symonds, while the second reveals the influence of applied columns on Boston case pieces made by London-trained turners.[4]

A wide variety of furniture forms survives the Symonds shops, including chests with one drawer (fig. 2), chests of drawers (fig. 3), cupboards (fig. 4), cabinets (fig. 5), chamber tables or dressing stands (fig. 6), upholstered chair frames (fig. 7), glass cases (fig. 8), and tables. All are carefully constructed and heavily ornamented. Dated Symonds products range between 1676 and 1701. Why no examples survive with dates before 1676 is unclear, but it seems from other New England joinery schools that the fashion for dating furniture did not take hold (with few exceptions) until the 1670s. Another Essex County joinery tradition, for example, includes furniture dated between 1678 and 1701, surely more than a coincidence.

The Mannerist aesthetic of these case pieces is based on strong architectural organization of the cases and on a subtle contrast set up among various colored woods. The oak was not finished originally and was flesh-colored when new — only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries did seventeenth-century furniture receive the heavy coats of dark varnish with which it inevitably is today associated. Laid out on the light oak were walnut plaques, corbels, and keystones, pinkish cedar moldings, and ebonized spindles, crease moldings, and other details. In one case, a chest with drawer has a mahogany date panel. These extraordinary compositions prove that the earliest New England furniture was not crude or primitive, but rather refined and impressive from an architectural and a coloristic standpoint.

John Symonds' influence can be followed through his apprentices. He trained two sons in his trade, James Symonds (1633-1714), who remained in Salem throughout his life, and Samuel Symonds (1638-1722), who in 1663 moved to Rowley Village near Topsfield and remained there. John Symonds also trained two other apprentices, John Pease (1654-1734), who in 1681 moved to Enfield, Connecticut, and Nathaniel Silsbee (born about 1650 — died 1717/18). James Symonds in turn trained two of his sons, John Symonds (1666-1728/9) and Thomas Symonds (1677-1758), and Samuel Symonds trained at least three apprentices, William Brown (born about 1655 — died 1690), Joshua Bisson (1652-1750), and Nathaniel Capen (1695-1749).[5] This large group of workmen established the Symonds style as the dominant furniture-making tradition in southern Essex County (with the exception of Lynn, dominated by another strong tradition) until perhaps 1705 or 1710, when early Baroque or William-and-Mary style case pieces with dovetailed board cases and figured veneers drove joined furniture out of fashion. However, the Symonds joiners turned their hands to new-fashioned joined interior paneling and thus did not completely lose their livelihoods because of the work of cabinetmakers.



Fig. 3. Chest of drawers, attributed to the Symonds shops, 1680-1710. H: 44 ¾" W: 44 ¼" D: 22 3/16". Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (1944.22).



Fig. 4. Cupboard with three drawers, attributed to the Symonds shops, 1680-1700. H: 58 ¾" W: 44" D: 20 ½". Essex Institute (108,889).

One important monument of the Symonds shops is a glass case front (fig. 8), the only surviving New England example of this once common furniture form. Glass cases were used to store delicate Venice glasses and other table garnitures. This fragment was found re-used as a ventilator over the door of a closet in the parlor of the Reverend Joseph Capen House in Topsfield (1683) when it was restored by George Francis Dow (1868-1936) in 1913. The glass case undoubtedly was made by either Samuel Symonds, who built the desk or pulpit of the Topsfield meeting house in 1682, or by his apprentice, Nathaniel Capen, the son of the minister of the church who built the Capen House.[6] The turned spindles of the glass case grill are identical to those on two other Symonds products which are of great interest.



Fig. 5. Cabinet or case of boxes, attributed to the Symonds shops, dated 1676. H: 17 ¼" W: 17" D: 9 7/8". The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum (58.526). Photograph: George Fistrovich.

These two products are the upholstered chair (fig. 7) and one of three known chamber tables or dressing stands (fig. 6). The turned ornament is recognizable as Symonds work, but the joinery of both objects is not. The implication is that these are products of a joiner who did not know how to turn and who relied on the Symonds shops for that service.[7] This is one of the few unquestionable instances of what must have been a widespread practice, the jobbing out of turned ornament. Generally joiners from large English cities did not know how to turn because guild regulations enforced the turner's right to keep the mystery and art of his craft separate, but in rural England, no such regulation existed. It is in fact surprising to see a joiner from an urban area in England like Symonds possessed of turning skills.



Fig. 6. Chamber table or dressing stand, joinery by an unknown shop, turned ornament attributed to the Symonds shops, 1680-1700. H: 32½" W: 30½" D: 18". The Art Institute of Chicago, Dr. Sewell L. Avery Fund.

No antiquarian research in Essex County would be worth its salt without a quote from the diary of the Reverend Dr. William Bentley, and aptly enough Bentley recorded the last flickering memories in late eighteenth-century Salem of the former high reputation of the Symonds workmen. On February 5, 1796, Bentley noted the death of John Symonds, the great-great-grandson of the original patriarch joiner from Great Yarmouth:

> This day was buried M[r] John Symonds, a Batchelor, from his House near the ferry. With the loss of this man the appearance of the last & the beginning of this Century is lost. His father died a few years since at 100, & John died at 74. The children all lived in single life till they were advanced, & only one ever entered into married life & she after 70.



Fig. 7. Serge chair, joinery by an unknown shop, turned ornament attributed to the Symonds shops, 1685-1695. H: 41 5/8" W: 19" D: 16 7/8" SH: 19¾". Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, anonymous gift in memory of Ralph Lowell, President of the Museum of Fine Arts, 1951-1968 (1978.384).

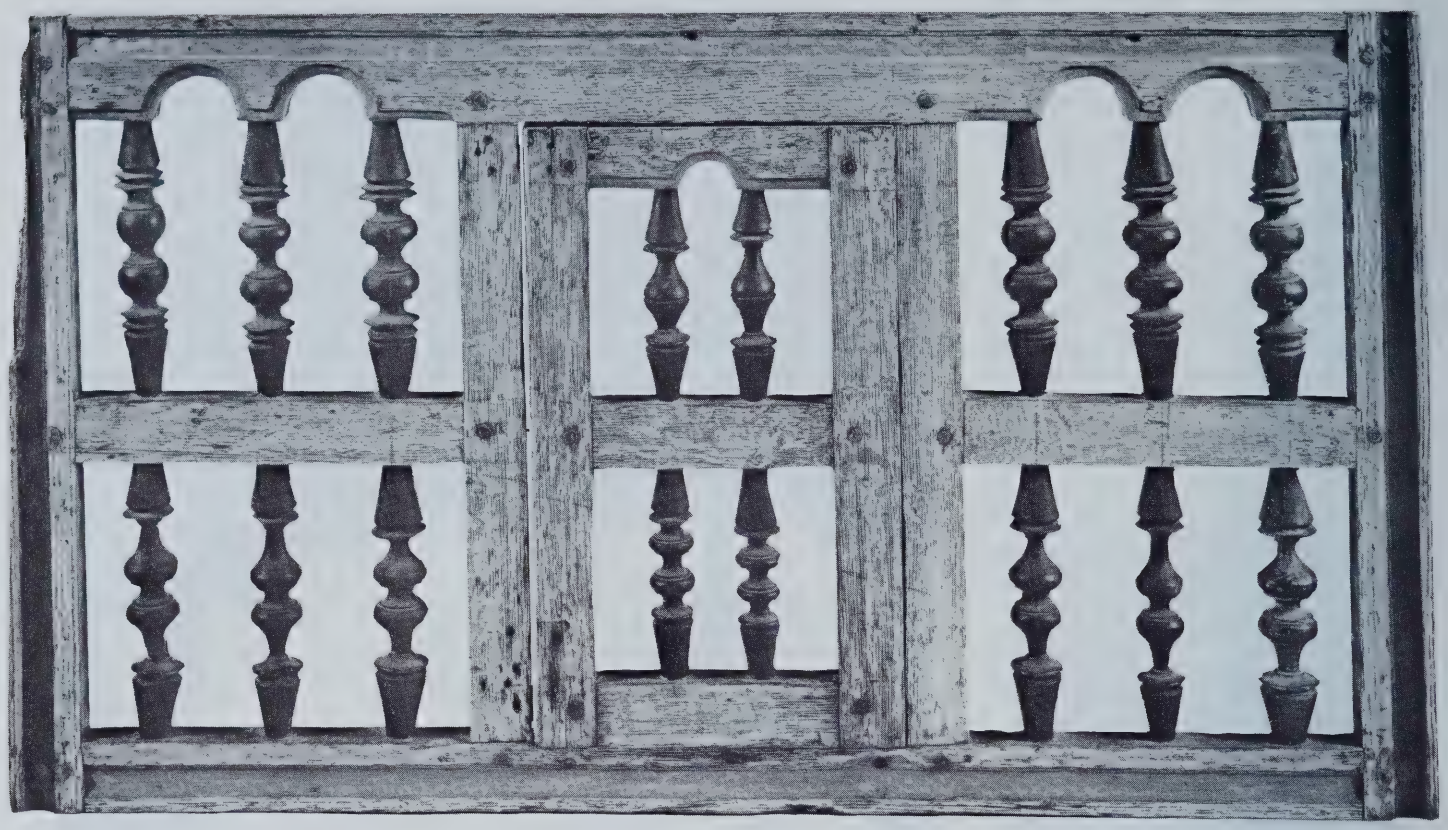


Fig. 8. Glass case front, attributed to Samuel Symonds or Nathaniel Capen, 1685-1710. H: 18" W: 32 5/8" D: 1". Topsfield Historical Society. Photograph: Richard Cheek.

Bentley was wrong on a number of counts. This John Symonds was not a bachelor, but an aged widower. Evidently Bentley was intent on caricaturing the entire family as a bunch of eccentrics, like a clock winding down on the memory of the seventeenth century and on Bentley's own century. In any case, Bentley went on to describe the Symonds house:

> The windows of this house are of the small glass with lead in diamonds & open upon hinges. The Doors open with wooden latches. The Chairs are the upright high arm chairs, & the common chairs are the short backed. The tables small & oval, the chest of drawers with knobs, & short swelled legs. The large fire place, & the iron for the lamp. The blocks of wood in the corner [the corner beams]. The Press for pewter plates with round holes over the door of it. Large stones rolled before the door for steps. Old Dutch maps and map mondes highly colored above a Century old. The beds very low, & the curtains hung upon the walls. The woolen caps worn by the men, & the small linen caps tied under the chin by the women.[8]

If only the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities could get into this house! What Bentley was describing, as he well knew, was a virtually undisturbed seventeenth-century time capsule. Some of the furniture he described without question was the work of the Symonds shops, out of the furniture business since the early eighteenth century. Museum curators of today can take a more sanguine view of the Symonds shops in their heyday. A major exhibition of seventeenth-century New Engalnd arts, "New England Begins: The Seventeenth Century," which will open at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in May of next year will include four examples of Symonds furniture among the 500 artifacts to be on display, and the shades of these workmen will be able once again to take pride in their contributions to the households of early Salem.

Notes

[1]The two basic sources for information on the Symonds shops are Benno M. Forman, "The Seventeenth-Century Case Furniture of Essex County, Massachusetts And Its Makers" (M.A. Thesis, University of Delaware, 1968), and Forman's "The Osborne Family Chest Rediscovered," Historical New Hampshire, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Spring 1971), pp. 26-29.

[2]Forman, "Essex County," pp. 42-43.

[3]George Francis Dow, ed., The Probate Records of Essex County, Massachusetts (Salem: Essex Institute, 1917), Vol. II, pp. 248-249.

[4]Robert Francis Trent, "Two Seventeenth-Century Salem Upholstered Chairs," Essex Institute Historical Collections, Vol. 116 (1980), pp. 34-40.

[5]Forman, "Essex County," pp. 43-46.

[6]Forman, "Essex County," pp. 44-46.

[7]Trent, "Salem Chairs," pp. 37-40.

[8]The Diary of William Bentley, 4 Vols. (Salem: Essex Institute, 1907), Vol. 2, p. 172.

Robert F. Trent is a Research Associate from the Department of American Decorative Arts and Sculpture at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

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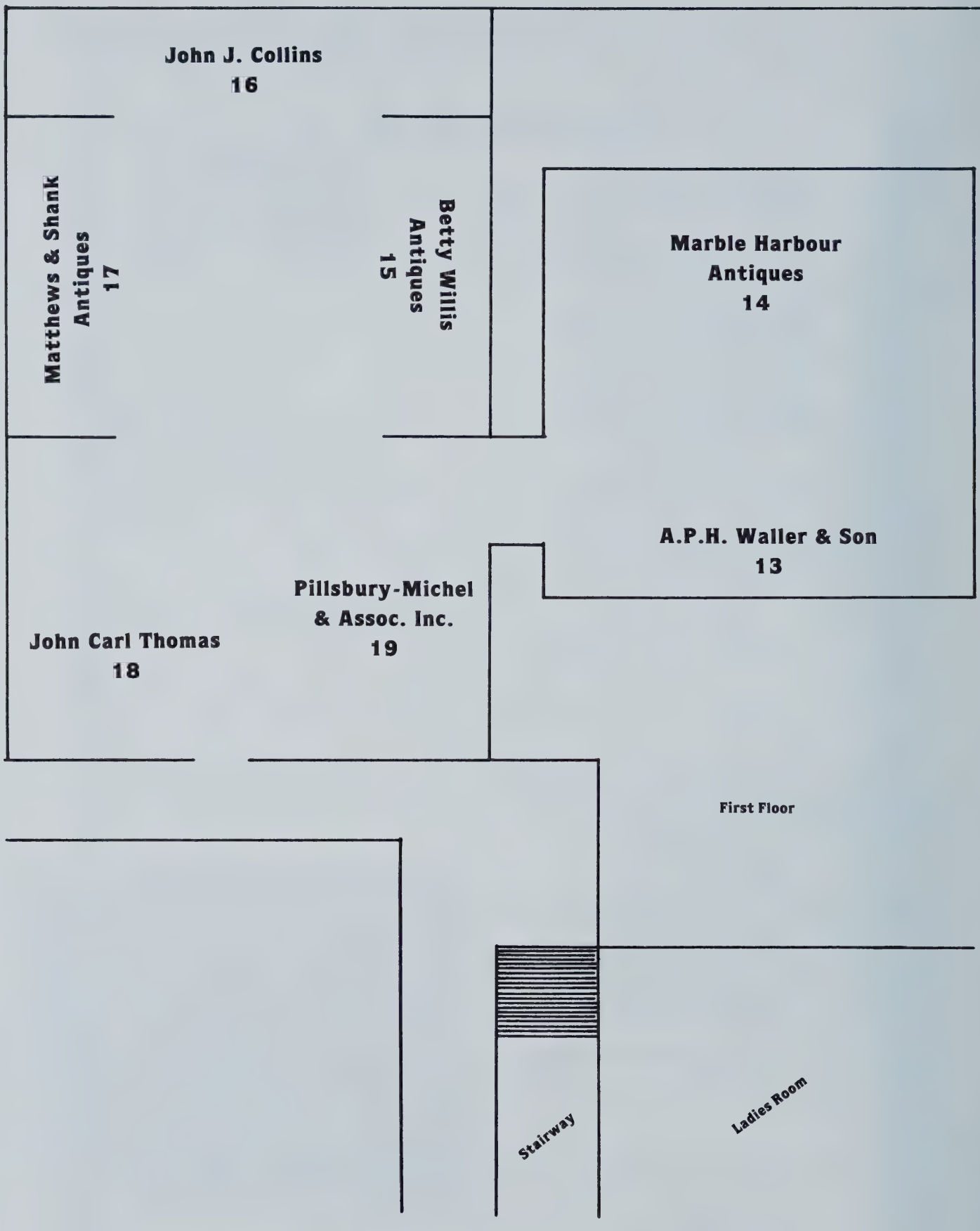
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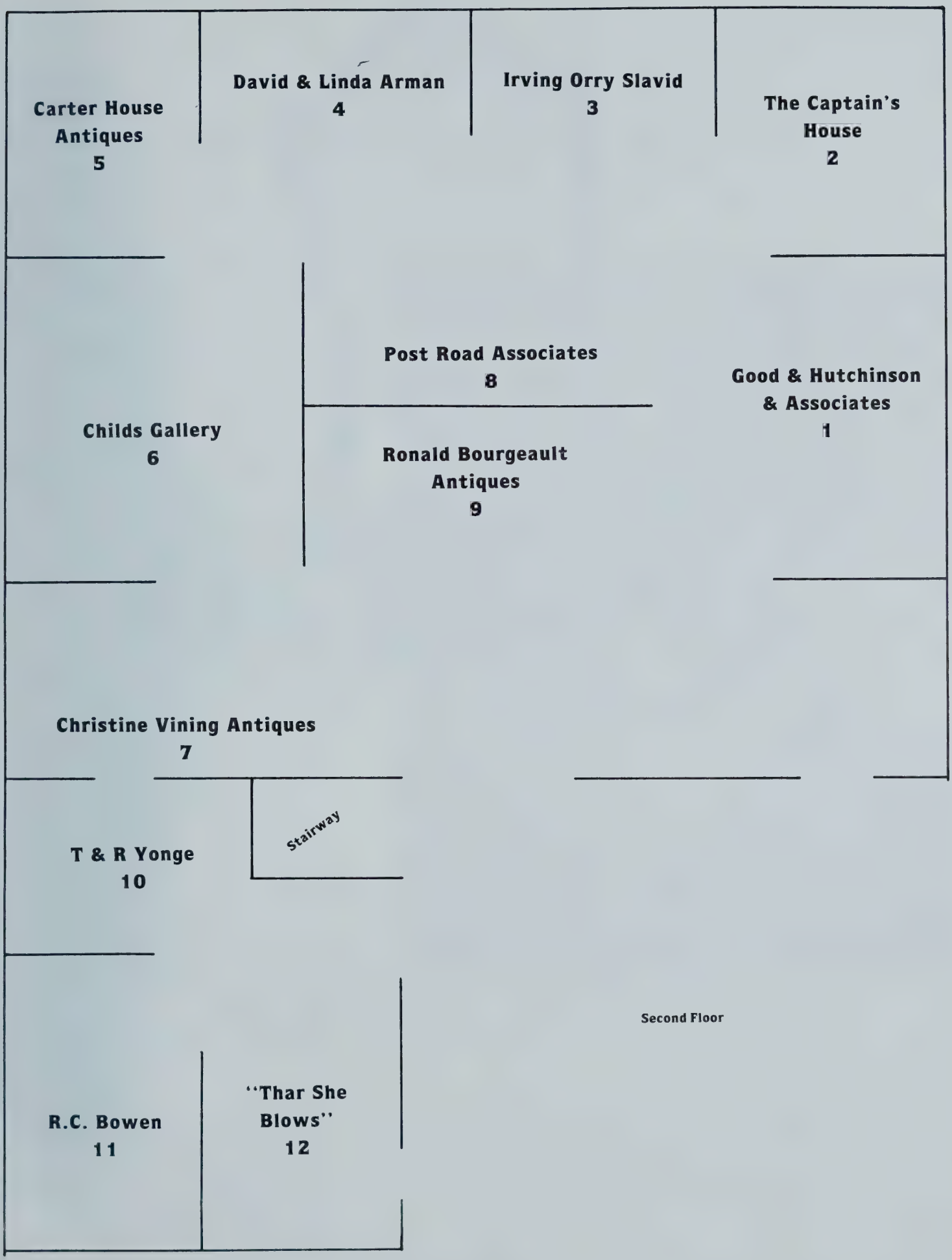
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Rominer Lovewell
The Artist Who Might Have Been

By Stuart Parnes

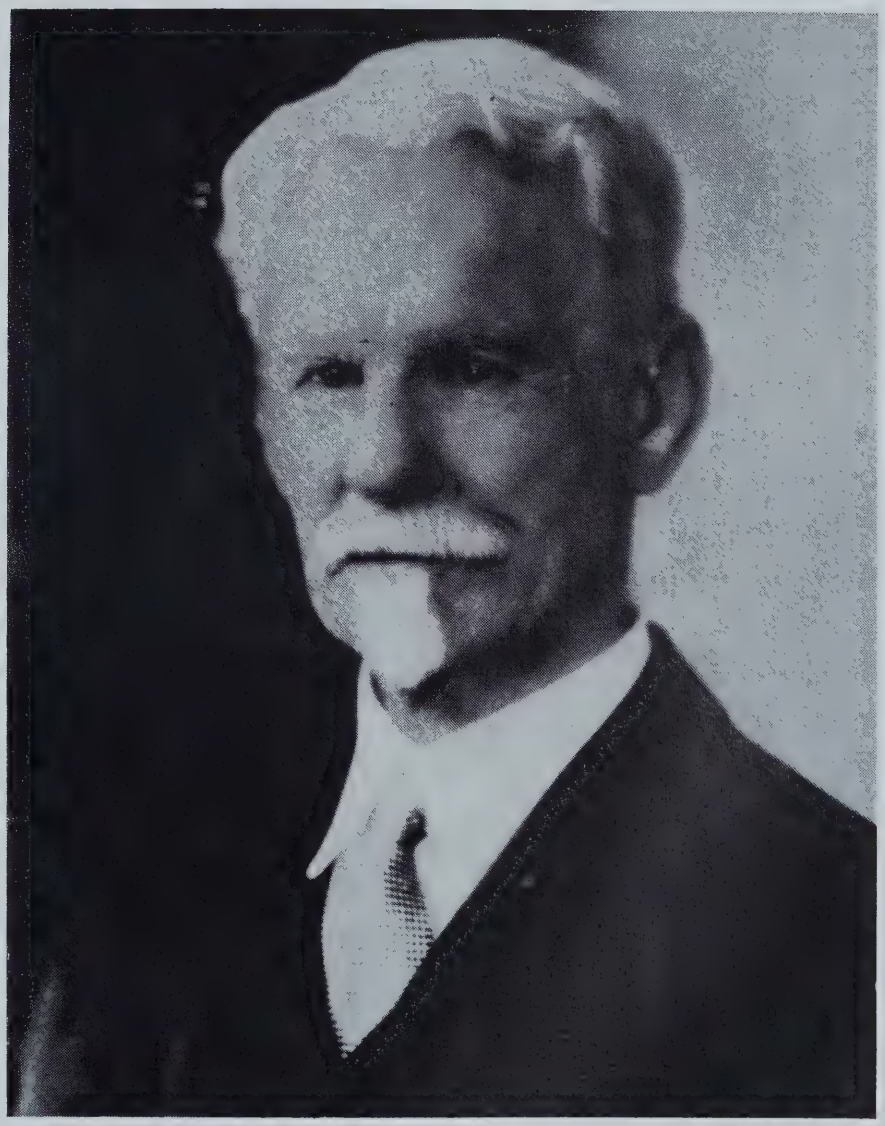
During the 19th century Gardner, Massachusetts was a very small, rural community. Located 60 miles west of Boston, it was not the sort of place that you would expect to produce an accomplished artist. Yet on 4 September 1853, a child was born there who would develop into an exceptional talent. He was named Rominer Lovewell and was the first child of Caroline Lamb, the daughter of a farmer, and Sewell K. Lovewell, a blacksmith. The boy's great-great-grandfather was Captain John Lovewell, a notorious Massachusetts Indian killer.

For the first four years of his life, Rominer lived in the Lovewell ancestral home on Lovewell Road in Gardner. Then in 1858 the family moved 10 miles eastward to the growing mill town of Fitchburg. Sewell Lovewell had decided to leave the small forge where he worked and begin a new career as a machinist.

It was in Fitchburg that Rominer started his schooling, and according to family legend, it did not take long for the young boy to be punished by his teachers for "doodling in class."

Rominer's earliest sketchbook and scrapbook were both begun during these early years in Fitchburg, and they betray the boy's fascination with railroads and train wrecks. In those days a main railroad line reached westward out of Boston through Fitchburg, so the great steam trains would have been a common sight. The thundering engines and howling whistles would have turned the head of any young boy, but Rominer took more than a passing interest. He captured the trains and their crews on paper.

We might have ended up with a painter of railroad scenes had not Sewell Lovewell decided to move again. In 1871, when Rominer was 17, the family moved into a house at 39 Walnut Street in Chelsea, Massachusetts. Chelsea was a fast-growing working class suburb of Boston across



Photograph of the artist, Rominer Lovewell, ca. 1923

the Charles River and Chelsea Creek to the northeast of the city.

Sewell joined with Mark T. Greenwood to form Lovewell & Greenwood, light machinery manufacturers. It is assumed that he expected his son Rominer to join him in the business. In the Lovewell family being an artist was not considered a suitable profession for a man. Nevertheless, Rominer somehow found a way to take art classes. In 1872-1873 he attended Richardson's School of Art at 460 Washington Street, Boston (opposite Jordan Marsh), and in 1874 he was instructed by W.A. Titcombe at the same address.

From the studies and sketchbooks done soon after his arrival in Boston, we can see a clear and sudden transformation in the young Rominer Lovewell. The artist had turned his sights to the sea. Sheet after sheet of copies and studies show almost nothing but maritime scenes and seascapes. Drawings of vessels became more ambitious and detailed and the marine paintings of artists like Thomas Moran were chosen as models for style and composition.

By 1876, the artist had set a course for himself. Even though he may have been working part time for his father, Rominer Lovewell was listed for the first time in the Chelsea business directory as a "marine painter." That listing would remain for over 20 years.



Pencil sketch of yacht PLANCHET at Lowlor's Yard, East Boston, November 13, 1883

Pencil sketch of vessels at Widden's Dock, East Boston, November 20, 1883

When Mystic Seaport opened its exhibition of drawings, prints and paintings by Rominer Lovewell, it was the first time in this century that his works had been on public view. It all started with a phone call, almost exactly a year ago.

"My name is Gwendolyn McLeod. I have a box full of paintings and things done by my grandfather, and we're moving in a couple of weeks. Could you come over and have a look?"

Museum curators dream about phone calls like this. I said "sure".

What I found was an old trunk filled with letters, newspaper clippings, photographs and stacks of unsorted drawings, etchings, watercolors and oil paintings. A quick look through was enough to kindle the museum's official interest.

What I found was very exciting. There were more than 400 works in all. Over half were detailed pencil and pen-and-ink drawings of dockside activity along the East Boston waterfront between 1875 and 1925. There were scenes of ships under construction and under repair. There were studies of marine railways and spar yards. There were views of shear legs and floating grain elevators and even a ship-caulker's boat. And most significant of all, the majority of drawings were dated and even captioned with the names of docks and vessels. When we finally got them into chronological order, the group of drawings not only documented a half century of Boston Harbor shipping, but traced with unmistakable clarity the growth of Lovewell's artistic skill.

And there was more. A group of about 40 different etchings, generally undated and uncaptioned, proved to be some of the artist's best finished work. They showed Lovewell as a real master of the etching technique. Through this medium he was able to extend the dramatic potential of his pencil and pen work to produce some of his strongest images. Here we found the artist dealing with themes like the decline of sail and the takeover of iron and steel. What little notoriety Lovewell received during his lifetime evidently came from his etching. A few of the prints carried tantalizing inscriptions, like "exhibited in the N.Y. Etching Club, 1882", and at least one was purchased for publication by **Youth's Companion** Magazine of Boston.



Oil painting of an oil tanker at Texas Oil Works Terminal, Chelsea, August 27, 1921

And finally there was the color work. About 150 watercolor and oil paintings literally shed a whole new light on Lovewell's talent. There were fewer harbor scenes and more landscapes and seascapes. Many were painted outside the Boston area, marking Rominer's travels from Martha's Vineyard to Maine. Some of the early paintings seemed stiff and uncertain, but those done during the 1910's-20's were drawn so freely and with such flowing color that they are almost impressionistic.

Clearly, we had the makings of a solid exhibition. The family agreed, adding that Rominer was probably overdue for the public recognition he deserved.

Probably overdue! It was not until much later, after weeks of dead-ends and disappointments, that I appreciated just how "overdue" Rominer was. No one had ever heard of him. Only two of his paintings were discovered in any public collections anywhere in the country. He was not included in any index of Boston or New England artists. Libraries, historical societies and museums from Gardner to Boston were searched, but none had anything to offer. I began to wonder if Rominer had ever really existed.

I retreated to where I had begun, to his artwork. Although the notations contained obvious contradictions and inaccuracies, we were able to categorize the dates and inscriptions on the drawings and paintings. The clues we could pick up were followed through. Solid leads were tracked down. Forgotten exhibition catalogues and dusty records from the Massachusetts State Archives grudgingly yielded a few supporting facts. Gradually, artistic trends and work patterns began to emerge from Lovewell's opus, but his personal and family life remained a mystery.

A few pieces of the puzzle were found back in Chelsea. There, Rominer's 90-year old daughter Edith still lives with wonderfully vivid memories of her father. Rominer married Marion Covell of Nahant in 1888. Edith, their first child, was born in 1890, and when she was four years old she contracted a severe case of meningitis and almost died. She told me, 86 years later, that because of the ordeal her father gave up the etching work he was doing "for a Philadelphia company" and took a full-time job for his father at S.K. Lovewell & Co., Machinists.

This did help to explain the sudden drop in the artist's output after 1892. It seemed clear that during the 1880's, before he was married, Rominer had attempted to break into the mainstream of professional art as part of the new etching movement. His inclusion in an exhibition at the New York Etching Club in 1882 might have been very significant. The club had been formed by the premier "painter-etchers" of the day to legitimize the medium of etching. Yet Rominer was never accepted as a member of the club and never exhibited there again. Likewise the only record we have of any Philadelphia connection was Lovewell's inclusion in various exhibitions there during 1883 and 1884. Clearly something interrupted Rominer's career.



Pen and ink drawing of 3 vessels at Green's Dock, East Boston, June 1886

Edith had a clear recollection of the years that followed. She alone of Rominer's four children encouraged her father to continue his artwork in the little free time that his machinist's trade left him. She recalled going with him on weekend excursions to watch him draw or paint. On trips to Nahant, for example, they would take the train together from Chelsea to Lynn and then board a horse-drawn "barge" that slowly made its way along the bumpy roads that led out to the beach. There, the two of them would walk hand in hand along the shore, Rominer with his paint box strapped to his back.

What a splendid memory. And yet the pieces don't quite fit. Was Rominer really working full-time as a machinist after 1894? The Chelsea directories continue to list him as a "marine artist" until 1902. What's more, the dating of his drawings and paintings from this period continue to show that most were being done on weekdays, not weekends. There is still much we have to learn.

The business directories do concur that from 1902 to 1924 Rominer Lovewell was working as a machinist or the Lovewell-Henrici Company of Chelsea, manufacturers of laundry machinery.

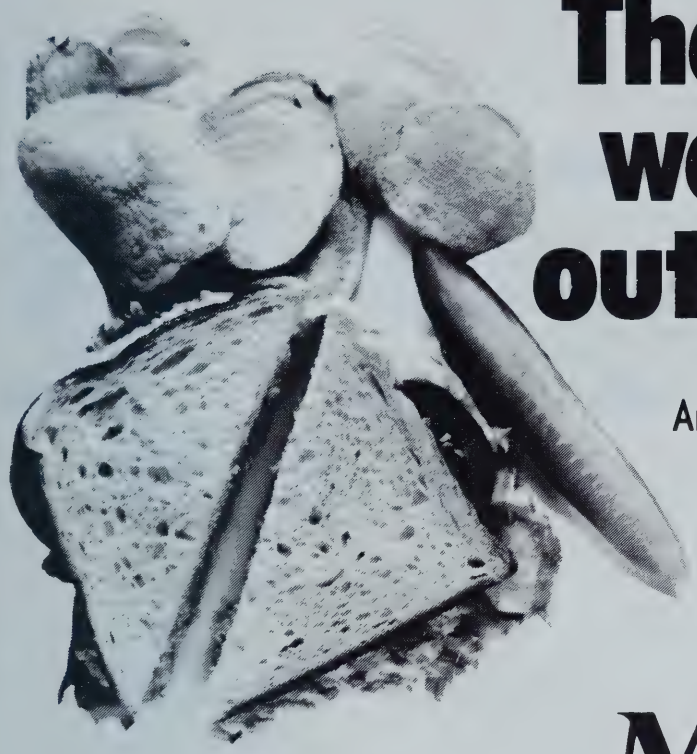
In 1925, Rominer retired and moved with his wife to neighboring Everett, Massachusetts. There, on November 28th, 1932 he died after a long heart ailment. His etching plates and small press were taken to the dump. His daughter Edith and son Percival divided the paintings and drawings they wanted and the rest were discarded or sold.

And now, because of a phone call from Percival's daughter, some of Rominer Lovewell's work has come to light again. We have made a start of the rediscovery of this artist who might have been, but we have far to go. Some of the material found has been mounted as an exhibit which opened at the Peabody Museum on 5 November 1981.

Stuart Parnes is Associate Curator for exhibits at Mystic Seaport in Connecticut. He organized the exhibit which has been displayed at Mystic and the Mariner's Museum in Newport News, Virginia.

Sketches of sailing vessels — pencil and chalk — 1876





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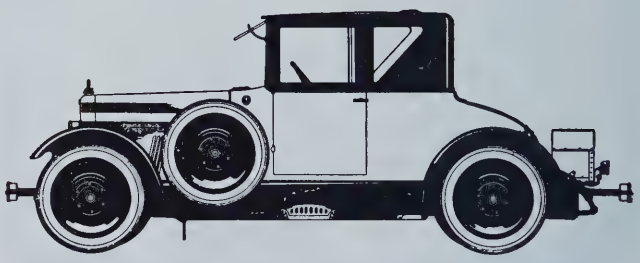
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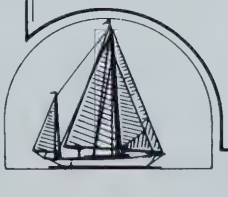
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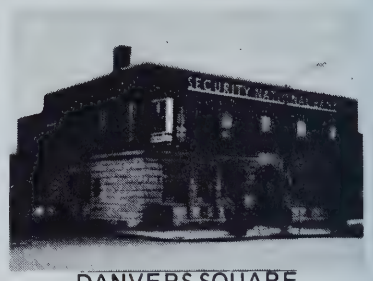
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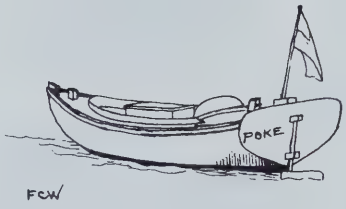


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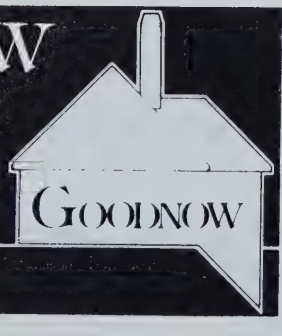
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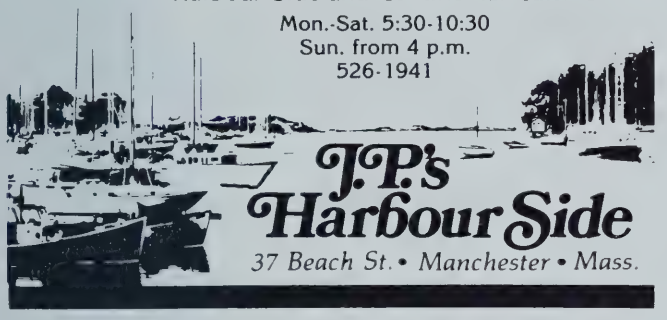
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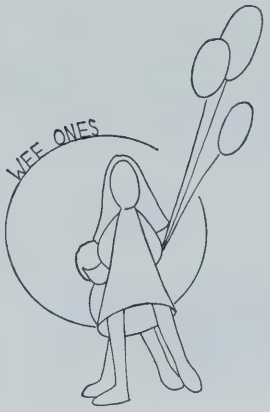
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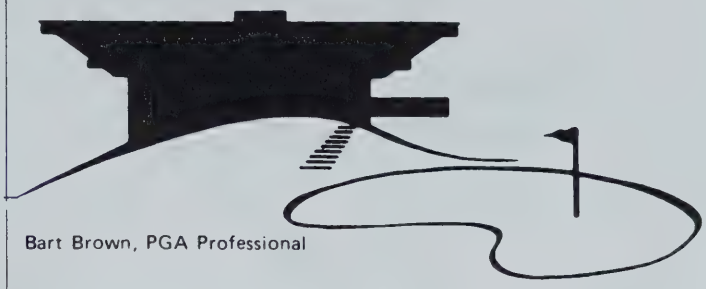


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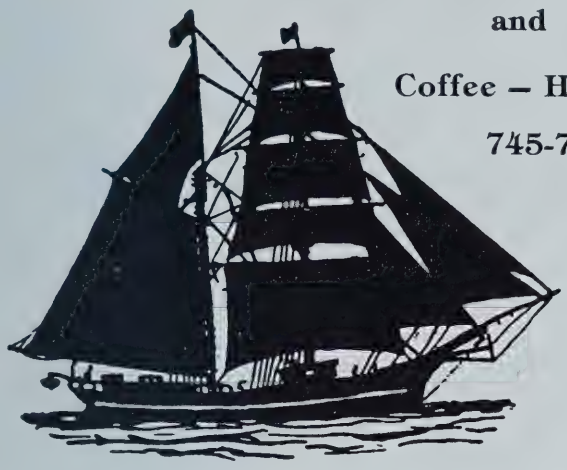
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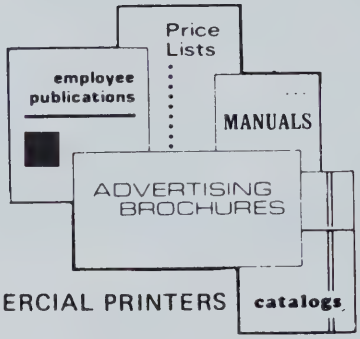
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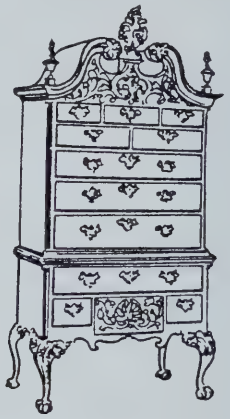
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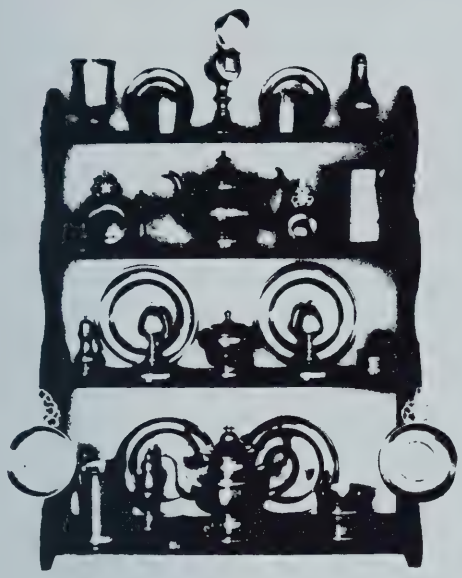
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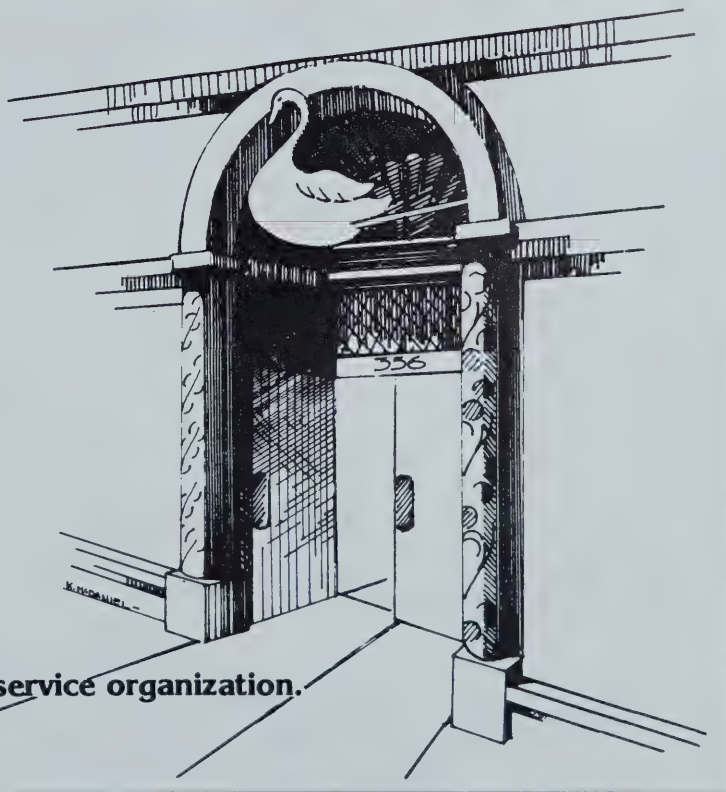
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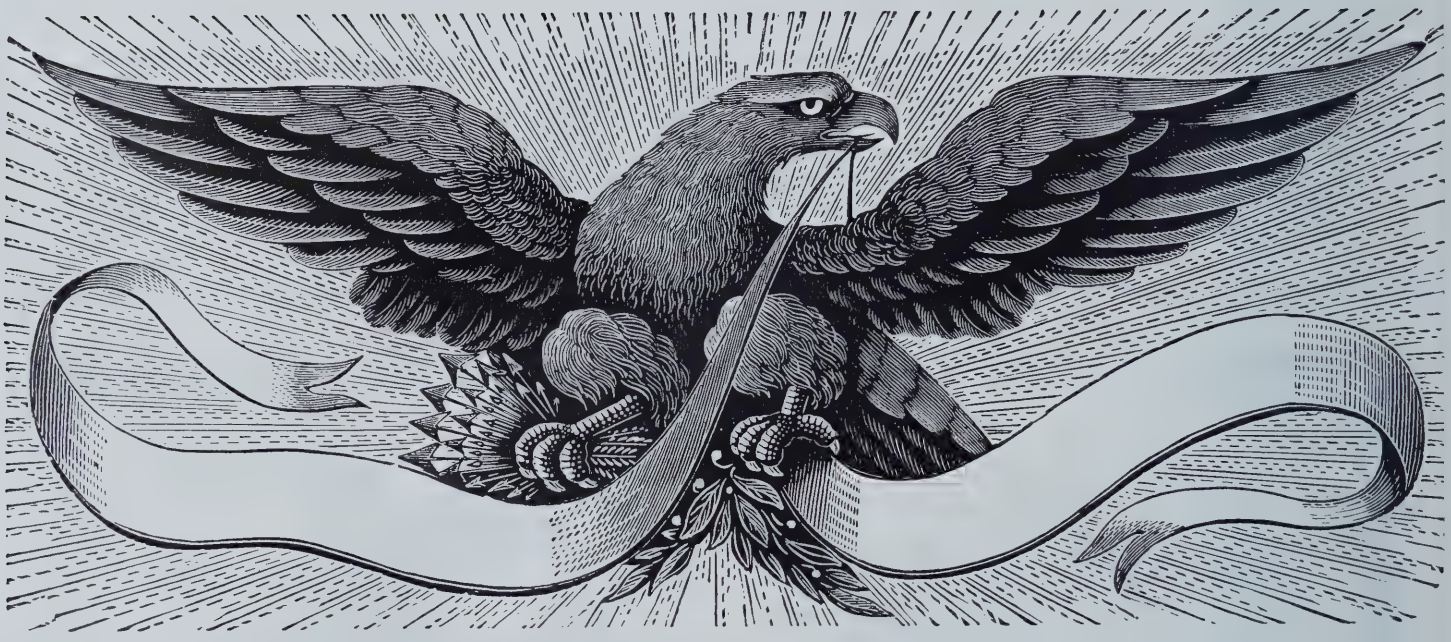


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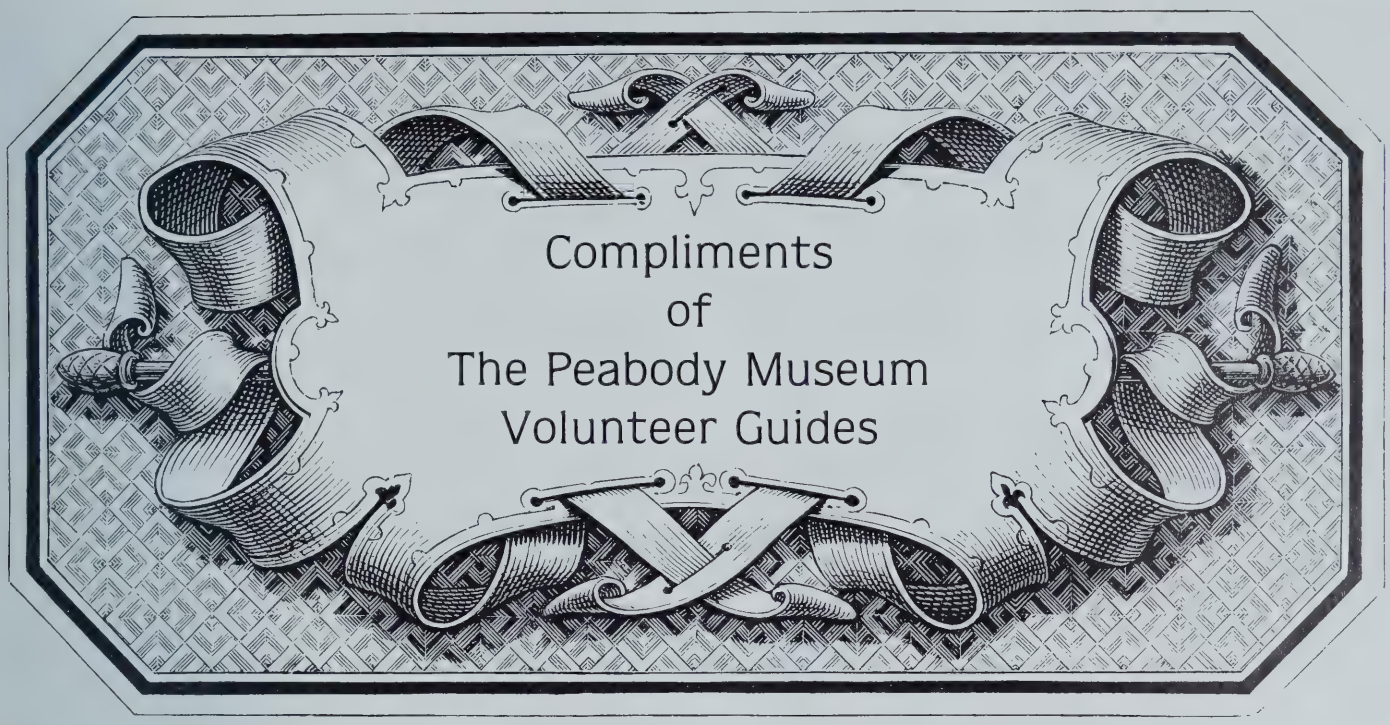
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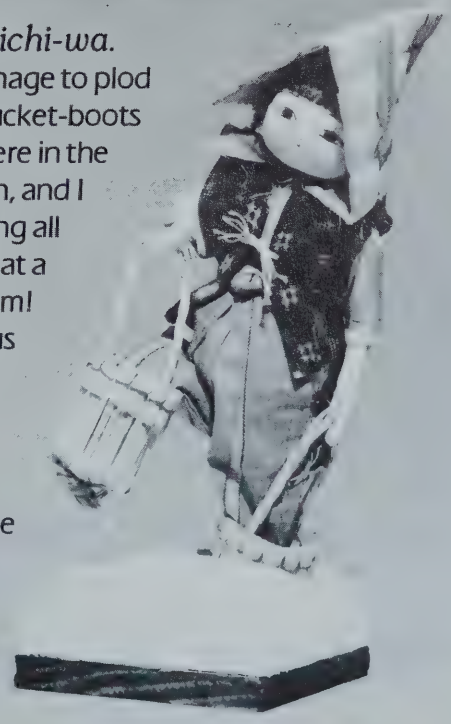


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"Konnichi-wa.
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Sayonara."



Meet Michiko of Japan, transient guest in the Shop at the
Peabody Museum of Salem

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